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TAGS: PINR ECON EFIN EINV PGOV PREL EN

SUBJECT: (U) KUDOS FOR REPORTING ON ESTONIA'S ECONOMIC TIES TO RUSSIA (C-RE9-00485)

REF: TALLINN 35

Classified By: SUZANNE MCCORMICK, DIR., INR/OPS. REASON: 1.4(C).

¶1. (C) WASHINGTON ANALYSTS GREATLY APPRECIATE INFORMATION FROM POST ON ESTONIA'S ECONOMIC TIES TO RUSSIA. ANALYSTS CONTINUE TO FOLLOW ESTONIA'S ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL TIES TO RUSSIA IN LIGHT OF EU, NATO, AND US RESPONSES TO THE AUGUST 2008 GEORGIA CONFLICT AND THE MOST RECENT UKRAINE-RUSSIA GAS DISPUTE. ANALYSTS ARE ALSO INTERESTED IN HOW THESE STRATEGIES MAY AFFECT ESTONIA'S RELATIONS WITH THE NEW US ADMINISTRATION. ANALYSTS WOULD APPRECIATE ANY INFORMATION ON ESTONIA-RUSSIA RELATIONS, AS TIME AND RESOURCES PERMIT. MANY THANKS, AND REGARDS FROM WASHINGTON.

¶1A. (U) HOW IS ESTONIA ADJUSTING ITS STRATEGY IN THE EU AND NATO TO ADDRESS ITS CONCERNs ABOUT RUSSIA? IS ESTONIA DEVELOPING PARTNERSHIPS WITH OLDER AND/OR BIGGER EU OR NATO MEMBERS, OR IMPROVING BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA?

¶1B. (U) WHICH ESTONIAN OFFICIALS ARE EXPRESSING THEIR CONCERNs ABOUT THE POSSIBLE DIRECTION OF US-RUSSIA RELATIONS?

¶1C. (U) REFTEL INDICATES THE REAL ECONOMIC CONCERN WITH RESPECT TO RUSSIA IS THAT CAPITAL IN ESTONIA IS CONCENTRATED IN THE HANDS OF A VERY FEW, WHO ARE SUBJECT TO MANIPULATION INSIDE RUSSIA. WHO ARE THESE FIGURES AND HOW ARE THEY BEING MANIPULATED BY RUSSIA?

¶1D. (U) IN WHAT WAYS HAS RUSSIA ATTEMPTED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ESTONIA'S ECONOMIC SLOWDOWN TO GAIN CONTROL OVER ECONOMIC ASSETS IN ESTONIA?

¶1E. (U) WHICH ESTONIAN OFFICIALS ARE WORRIED ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF INTERNAL INSTABILITY IN RUSSIA AS A RESULT OF THE GLOBAL ECONOMIC/FINANCIAL CRISIS AND DO THEY VIEW INTERNAL INSTABILITY IN RUSSIA AS A POTENTIAL THREAT TO ESTONIA'S NATIONAL SECURITY?

¶12. (U) PLEASE CITE C-RE9-00485 IN THE SUBJECT LINE OF REPORTING IN RESPONSE TO THE ABOVE QUESTIONS.

CLINTON